

## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 746

By Odom

### A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Robert Burns of Nashville.

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived by individuals who were willing to sacrifice their own concerns to ensure our collective freedom and personal safety, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to be the home of so many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, in providing for the domestic tranquility of the community as a whole, society recognizes the need for a system of laws; the enforcement of the law has been entrusted to a small number of dedicated individuals; and

WHEREAS, these individuals face daily the rigors of human conflict in protecting those whom they so selflessly serve; and

WHEREAS, the people of Tennessee are fortunate to be served by the brave and dedicated law enforcement officers who put their lives on the line while carrying out their essential duties; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee State Prison Correctional Officer Robert Burns was one such outstanding public servant, and it is appropriate that this General Assembly should pause to remember and honor the memory of this courageous officer, dutiful public servant, and exceptional human being who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the cause of public safety; and

WHEREAS, a Nashville native, Officer Burns honorably served his nation as a member of the United States Marine Corps; and

WHEREAS, Robert Burns was later employed by Western Union and the Metropolitan Nashville Parks and Recreation Department until accepting a position as a security guard for Wells Fargo and Vanderbilt University, serving each employer with the utmost acumen and alacrity; and

WHEREAS, realizing that citizenship entails many responsibilities as well as

privileges, Officer Burns ran for several public offices, including for delegate to the 1971 Constitutional Convention, Metro Nashville Council, and State Representative; and

WHEREAS, in 1975, Robert Burns embarked on his career as a Correctional Officer at the Tennessee State Prison, earning the respect and admiration of his fellow officers and a grateful public for his dedication and professionalism; and

WHEREAS, an exceptional officer, Robert Burns was remembered by his co-workers for his devotion to his family, his generosity and good humor, and his meticulous attention to the prison's system of rules; and

WHEREAS, Robert Burns enjoyed the loving companionship of his wife, Anne, and was the proud father of his beloved daughters, Leann and Laura; and

WHEREAS, deeply devoted to and inspired by his family, Officer Burns always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Robert Burns was shot and killed at a bus shelter at the intersection of Fourth Avenue North and Deaderick Street in Nashville on February 11, 1978; he left work early that day because he was feeling ill and was waiting for a bus to arrive when a paroled inmate approached him; and

WHEREAS, the parolee had been disciplined by Officer Burns several months earlier and had been sent to the maximum security prison for thirty days as punishment. When the parolee asked Officer Burns if he remembered him and he responded that he did not, the suspect then produced a handgun and shot Officer Burns once in the chest, killing him; and

WHEREAS, a trusted member of his community, Robert Burns regarded his work as a correctional officer to be of the utmost significance; and

WHEREAS, Officer Burns left behind an indelible legacy of integrity, probity, and valor in his public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, on the thirtieth anniversary of his untimely passing, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember and honor the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE

CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Officer Robert Burns, recalling his impeccable character, unquestionable valor, and stalwart commitment to living an exemplary life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Robert Burns.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.